Pension Cases of Ex-Servicemen

625. MISS SAROJ KHAPARDE: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) the schemes and policies for the benefit of ex-Servicemen;

(b) how effectively are these implemented;

(c) how many cases of re-settlement of pension dues as a result of award of the Fifth Pay Commission are still pending; and

(d) the steps taken by Government for speedy settlement of these pension cases?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) to (d) The following schemes for resettlements and welfare of ex-Servicemen are in operation:—

I. Resettlement schemes: These include reservation in Government jobs grant of loan financial assistance for setting up for self employment ventures, training programmes to improve employability after retirement or release from service, ex-Servicemen Coal transport companies, reservation in the allotment of oil product dealership/distributorships for the war widows, war disabled etc. The Director General Rsettlement also sponsors ex-Servicemen's security agencies to various public sector undertakings and private organisations.

II. Welfare schemes/benefits being extended to ex-Servicemen: Finanaical Assistance

A portion of the earnings of Armed Forces Flag Day Fund is set apart as Raksha Mantri's Discretionary Fund and is used to provide financial assistance to poor and needy Ex-Servicemen who are in penury, for various purposes viz., medical treatment, marriage of daughters, repair of houses, education of children. Monthly financial assistance up to a period of two years is also provided to old and infirm Ex-Servicemen/widow of Ex-Servicemen living in penury.

Education facilities for children:

(a) Free education facilities are provided to children of Defence personnel killed or disabled in action.

(b) 25 seats in the MBBS, one seat in BDS and two seats in

Engineering are available through Kendriya Sainik Board (KSB) to dependents/wards of certain categories of Defence personnel.

(c) 25% seats are reserved for the wards of serving and ex-Servicemen personnel in Sainik Schools.

(d) States/UTs have made reservation of seats in professional colleges/ ITI/Polytechnics for wards of serving and retired Defence Personnel.

(e) An education grant of Rs. 600/- and Rs. 300/- p.m. per student is provided towards of war bereaved, disabled, attributable and non-attributable peace time casualties respectively, housed in 35 War Memorial Hostels, to enable them to pursue their studies.

Medical Facilities

(a) Ex-Servicemen, their families and families of deceased service personnel drawing pension of any kind are entitled to free outpatient treatment at Military Hospitals.

(b) Ex-Servicemen suffering from serious diseases are given financial assistance of up to 60% of the total expenditure for treatment in civil hospitals in case they cannot raise funds from other sources. These are By-pass surgery, Open-Heart Surgery/Valve replacement Pacemaker implant, Angiography/Angioplast, Kidney/Renal transplantation, Dialysis, Cancer and Spastic Paraplegics. Assistance for Dialysis is restricted to Rs. 75,000/- only.

(c) Leading hospitals throughout the country have been empanelled from where the Ex-Servicemen can get treatment for serious diseases on payment of 40% of the total expenditure. The remaining 60% are paid directly to the hospitals by the KSB.

(d) Ex-servcemen who are not availing medical facilities from military hospital may choose to draw Rs. 100/- every month for medical purposes.

Travel Concessions

Following concessions are available to war widows/gallantry award winner which can be availed on production of Identity Card issued by KSB:—

(a) *Rail Travel Concession*: 75% concessions in rail fare for travel in

II Class is available to war widows including those of IPKF casualties. Also, recipients and widows of posthumous recipients of Chakra series of gallantry awards are entitled for free rail pass for travelling in Class I/II AC Sleeper.

(b) *Air Travel Concession*: Certain categories of ex- Servicemen are eligible to 50% concession in fare for air travel in domestic flights of the Indian Air Lines.

Reservation of House-Sites/Houses: Majority of States have made reservations for serving/retired Armed Forces personnel in allotment of house sites/house.

Grant for Repair of Houses: Financial assistance is provided especially to war widows/war disabled for repair of house on 50% cost sharing basis with State Government up to an extent of Rs. 10,000/-.

Sainik Rest House Facilities: Over 252 Sainik Rest Houses have been created in the country which provide transit facilities to ex-Servicemen and dependants at nominal rates.

The above schemes, except reservation for ex-Servicemen in government jobs, are being implemented effectively. Department of Personnel and Training have issued instructions from time to ensure full utilisation of the vacancies reserved for ex-Servicemen.

Pension cases of ex-Servicemen

So far 2,85,912 cases of pensions have been revised consequent upon implementation of the recommendation of the Fifth Pay Commission. Presently 12,558 such cases are pending for revision. These cases have been received after 7.1.2000. For speedy settlement of pension cases, the Pension Disbursement Authorities have been authorised to revise cases of Family Pension at their level; and the procedure has been simplified and computerised. Progress of such cases is being continuously monitored.

Fortification measures in Kashmir

626. SHRI C. M. IBRAHIM: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether in the context of Kargil conflict followed with renewed